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RADIOHEAD... Thom Yorke (lead vocals, guitar), **COLIN GREENWOOD** (bass), **ED O'BRIEN** ("polite" guitar, backing vocals), **PHIL SELWAY** (Drums) and **JONNY GREENWOOD** ("abusive guitar). "A LITTLE EARLY TO VIEW THEM AS A UK ANSWER TO REM, BUT THE POTENTIAL IS DEFINITELY THERE" (*music week*), "QUEEN FOR THE NINETIES" (*face*), "BRITAIN'S ANSWER TO THE AMERICAN GRUNGE BAND NIRVANA" (*times*), "BRITAIN'S BEST ANSWER YET TO SMASHING PUMPKINS" (*i-D*). Many conflicting comparisons describe Radiohead, a 5-headed rock eccentric (Stone Roses, Smiths, Beatles, Pixies, Jam, Clash, Sonic Youth, Neil Young and many more). Unclassifiable as each band member has DIFFERENT tastes/influences, the songs are written from a state of conflict. Intense, driven music which swings between uneasy calm and desperation. A volatile sound which refuses to coast on any kind of 'scene', and tries constantly to tear itself apart. Peerless and unique *this isn't "the new anybody, this is the first and last Radiohead.* A phenomenon that exists when making music.

Radiohead had several LPs worth of classic songs up their sleeves from day one, but since early worldwide success, had no time to record them. Their exceptional first five releases were deemed "unsuitable" for day time radio (except "Creep", and *only* when it was re-released in the UK after being a planet-wide hit). In a three year career to date, only two of their singles have been playlisted, but the huge number of loyal Radiohead fans ensures consistent chart success. Although they also have many ardent fans in the media, Radiohead never joined the endless list of UK 'next big thing's. At first they were dismissed as "major label pop fodder" (as opposed to credible indie?), "ugly ducklings", "unfashionable" and accused of moaning for desiring UK recognition. Mocked for being the polite, shy antithesis of "rock and roll", or just ignored they were understandably stung by their early reception

Yet, without "image", "angles" or an ounce of hype, they grow continually more successful just on the strength of their music and live reputation. Having developed away from the limelight, *they wouldn't have it any other way.* They sold well over a million copies worldwide of their debut LP "**Pablo Honey**", and with the release of their second LP "**The Bends**" (already widely acclaimed as one of *the* classic LPs of the 90's) Radiohead have proved their potential.

Radiohead met at school in Oxford. In reaction to Summer-Of-Acid-House-Thames-Valley-Apathy groups playing to half empty venues in the city, they first formed the band THEN learnt how to play, with no second thoughts about image or musical style.

They were away at various colleges, meeting up during summer holidays. Thom was at Exeter University where he was reckoned to have been one of the best DJs at the Lemon Grove club. In Summer 1991 he got back together with ex-Samaritan Phil, Ed (once voted most eligible man in Oxford in a national magazine) and brothers Colin and Jonny G (sometimes affectionately referred to as 'The Greenwood Sisters'). Baby of the band, Jonny G, had to leave college after only one month (and still sometimes carries his text books around.)

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On the strength of their demos (which later became the highly rated "Drill" EP) there followed a signing frenzy involving over 20 A&R folk at a live gig in Oxford's tiny Jericho Tavern. Radiohead (the name is from a Talking Heads song) were signed within only THREE WEEKS to Parlophone by the end of 1991.

In May 1992 their debut release, the "Drill" EP received high praise for all four tracks. "Prove Yourself" even received a day time play on Radio 1's Gary Davies show. Thom's first words to the national music press were "We play fuck off music, if you're not interested fuck you". "Drill" sold 3,000 copies and is now a highly sought after collectors item. Radiohead's frantic live performances began to win them a dedicated following and have continued to do so ever since.

While recording their next EP they warmed up with a song they'd been playing about with in rehearsal, not realising the tape was running. That song was "Creep", recorded spontaneously in one take. It became the lead track (and was once described as "one of the best pieces of rock since Everest"). The infamous guitar-crack before the chorus is Jonny G trying to spoil a song he originally didn't like. A positive song about getting creativity from self-hate, it caused no fuss attention-wise when released but became 1992's anthem of self loathing. "Creep" fell foul of radio's "no depressing songs in a depression (i.e. recession)", was never heard on day time radio and originally failed to make the UK top 75.

In the mean time Radiohead were becoming a legend on the live circuit. Their shows are unpredictable, tense experiences. The music takes control (Thom once broke a toe on stage kicking his guitar, while Jonny G who likes to feel nervous on stage often cuts his hands creating loud jazz noise with a small practice amp). Over 100 gigs (mainly supporting everybody/anybody) in 1992 continually won/stole new fans and earned poetic reviews.

Their rising popularity was reflected in '92 End Of Year polls where "Creep" was one of NME's Essential Ten Indie 45's of '92, and No.4 in their critics Top 50 Singles Of The Year. Radiohead were tipped as a band for 93 by Melody Maker and voted No.9 in their Top Ten New Bands for 1993 by NME readers. In 1993 Radiohead certainly lived up to those expectations with varying degrees of success in 1993. Their potential was under estimated and the general public were unaware of them. Being no part of any favoured 'scene' of the time they were deemed unfashionable by national UK media (tho rated 'best new band' by many regional and independent press - some local papers even campaigned via their columns to get Radiohead played on the radio!). So, **TO THE BAND'S PREFERENCE**, their following grew mainly by word of mouth, from their music and from the power and audience communication of live shows. Public, if not critical, acclaim.

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New Year '93: At their first headline tour the potential for being the next band with a religious following was spotted by Melody Maker at only the second date, packed with besotted, singing admirers. (as Thom once said, the audience remember the words if he ever forgets!). Reminded by the buzzy atmosphere of early Stone Roses and Suede gigs, they noted that "RADIOHEAD WERE PERFECT". Although this was only their first proper tour most gigs sold out to fanatical crowds every night. Tickets exchanged hands for up to £50.00 despite (or because of?) the small capacity of the venues. Radiohead became the biggest underground rock band in Britain.

February 1993: Another positive anthem (about being in a band and LOVING it), "Anyone Can Play Guitar" was again acclaimed for all three tracks and earned their first Single Of The Week in Melody Maker, was a Music Week Pick Of The Week and their first Top 40 hit. It stormed into the UK singles chart at 32 and straight out again with not one day time radio play. Three weeks later, the LP, "Pablo Honey", was a Top 30 UK hit. It had been recorded in only three weeks of Summer '92, was generally appraised as 'flawed perfection', proved Radiohead one of the UK's brightest new hopes in their own right and has sold steadily since, eventually going gold in the UK and platinum in the USA. One review called Radiohead "**Britain's best kept secret**" and even at this stage in their career predicted that they were "*set to become one of Britain's biggest rock bands*".

May 1993; "Pop Is Dead" was released as a single - it doesn't appear on any album. It received unfavourable national press but ecstatic regional/independent press. The "Pop Is Dead" UK tour was a mixture of high and low points. The band were frustrated by their reception from the UK media and used their inward rages as a positive force to provide furiously exciting performances. Disappointingly, "Pop Is Dead" peaked at 42 in the UK charts. Unnoticed, Radiohead left Britain under a cloud, to tour Europe and USA.

While few were excited about Radiohead at home, they were about to be plunged from UK obscurity to US stardom. They became the darlings of an American public often reminded of early U2. A radio station played an import of "Creep" - it's request lines rang off the hook. The import sold out in a week. Alternative and college radio soon picked up on it. Before long, "Creep" was No.1 on KROQ, L.A., possibly USA's most influential alternative station.

"Creep was the USA's most requested alternative track for five weeks and the video received heavy MTV play all Summer. Due to the loud buzz on Radiohead, Capitol Records rush-released "Pablo Honey" and "Creep". Having crossed over to Commercial Hit Radio, "Creep" was constantly on the USA's airwaves.

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June 1993: Radiohead played their first live US dates. Although offered great supports from major bands, in true Radiohead style they preferred to headline their own first USA dates in clubs. Some shows even sold out before the band had finished their European tour and reached America (L.A.s legendary Whiskey A Go Go in 20 minutes flat!). Radiohead played America and America experienced screaming, pantie-throwing HEADMANIA! An article in London's Evening Standard, "British Pop Unknowns Storm USA", introduced the UK to Radiohead when Radio 1 DJ, Steve Wright, mentioned the article on the air.

Meanwhile in America, the sell-out tour was extended due to demand (including an appearance on Arsenio Hall's TV show) and a frenzied Chicago concert was broadcast on TV. Radiohead achieved the rare distinction of a UK "alternative" band genuinely crossing over in the states as *both lp and single soared up the USA charts and spent over a month at No. 32 in both album AND single Top 40 charts*. This was the first mainstream acceptance of a new UK act since EMF and Jesus Jones success a few years earlier. "Pablo Honey" went gold in USA. Low UK profile aside, their success 'across the pond' was followed by The Cranberries, and lately by other UK acts like Portishead, Bush, Oasis, P.J. Harvey, Elastica, Take That and The Stone Roses - who have also made it into the Billboard Top 200 charts, still a rare feat.

Due ONLY to it's USA success and demand from their fans, "Creep" was re-released in the UK and stormed into the chart at No.7, spending a month in the Top 20 and proving the Stateside success was no fluke. A Top 20 solely on merit, Jon Bon Jovi would later cite "Creep" as the song he wished he'd written.

Though suddenly in demand at home, they didn't hang around to promote "Creep", but returned to America for a sell-out co-headline tour with Belly. They also made a live TV appearance on the first "Late Night Show" hosted by Conan O'Brien. Again, the live performances were greeted more than ecstatically. This time Melody Maker were there to witness the phenomenon of a Radiohead American show first-hand and reported that they'd "Never seen five undernourished ex-college boys from the home counties inspire such reckless enthusiasm, such devotion, such love".

Following USA, Radiohead toured Canada (where "Pablo Honey" had also gone gold). They supported Tears For Fears (who then went on to play a cover of "Creep" on the rest of their own tour - it has since also been covered live by Chrissie Hynde and appeared on the soundtrack of the Steven Dorff movie "S.F.W."). In December, Radiohead joined James as special guests on their European and UK tours - widely regarded one of The Double Bills Of 1993 - receiving extremely warm welcomes - definitely winning many admirers. (Live performances never fail to win new fans). Their reputation is such that shows in the UK naturally sell out without the critical massage enjoyed by their peers.

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By end of 1993 Radiohead were Music Week's "New Export Of The Year". "Pablo Honey" (an NME critics album of 1993) and "Creep" had scored hits WORLDWIDE. Praise for Radiohead's live performances were also pouring in from every corner of the planet. "Creep" was No.4 on Billboard's Modern Rock Tracks of 1993 and a Rolling Stone Magazine Critics top single of the year. Radiohead also made many UK polls for a second year running and although they topped none of the critics polls ("Creep" was No.2 M.M. critics single of the year). UK music fans voted "Creep" Single Of The Year in both Melody Maker and NME (for which they picked up a Brat Award). It also tied with Suede's "Animal Nitrate" to top Select's readers polls and was beaten (only just!) by Take That's "Pray" as Radio 1 Listeners Single Of The Year at The Brits and was later No.39 in The *Radio 1 Top 100 Songs Of All Time*. Radiohead ended 1993 having earned public acclaim through sheer hard work (including over 120 live shows), and talent. The downside of having to deal with worldwide stardom was that "Creep" not only made, but nearly destroyed Radiohead. Being so close, they were able emerge from their experience all the stronger.

They took '94 'off' to record a new LP with producer John Leckie (Pink Floyd, Magazine, Stone Roses) Demos of some of the new songs were around before "Pablo Honey" was even released. They started a World Tour in May and were greeted enthusiastically everywhere. The USA pattern (public THEN critical acclaim) repeated itself, Radiohead introduced the planet to an increasingly successful UK music scene. MTV Asia gave them more air time than any alternative rock band previously. They played to capacity crowds in Spain and Italy while tickets for their Japanese tour in June sold out well in advance (Tokyo, in the first day).

Three dates, May '94: *"Radiohead emerged to shrieks and squeals and the odd cry of 'WE LOVE YOU THOM!'. We love you Thom? This isn't bloody Take That! Then the penny dropped. What I was watching was a coronation. Radiohead are next in line for the throne. Go away and die U2. Abdicate James. Radiohead are the new kings of stadium rock"*. (TNT). At the first UK shows - screaming fans (and fractured ankles in Thom's case), aside - it was as if Radiohead had never been away. The gigs were becoming epic at times. The London concert was later released as a video - nobody could tell that Thom could hardly walk that night. They also appeared at Glastonbury and Reading Festivals.

"THIS IS OUR NEW SONG, JUST LIKE THE LAST ONE, A TOTAL WASTE OF TIME". "My Iron Lung" kicked off Phase 2 of Radiohead and was their first EP in a year. It was deemed "too raucous" for Radio 1, received the usual flippant reviews etc but was a Top 30 hit anyway, followed by a spectacularly received UK tour. Their army of British fans had remained loyal, and greatly swelled. Playing to packed, chanting crowds WORLDWIDE in 1994 and ending off with tours of Thailand and Mexico, Radiohead were becoming a force to be reckoned with.

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1995 began with some low key acoustic shows for their fans and a triumphant homecoming at Oxford Apollo (A venue Thom had once been ejected from!). Advance tapes of "The Bends" caused such a buzz that over 70 journalists flew from around the world to catch the show. Radiohead had a Top 20 hit with their new single "High And Dry" and the reaction to "The Bends" was stunning. A sellout UK tour showed what all the fuss was about. One review called "The Bends" *"A powerful, bruised, majestically desperate record of frighteningly good songs"* and across the board, EVERY review said more or less the same. Having garnered critical attention at home, "The Bends" also made the Billboard Top 200 chart and went gold in Britain.

Early '95, another world tour, returning for Bristol Sound City where Radiohead were regarded A HIGHLIGHT. "Fake Plastic Trees" a Top 20 hit in May, then sell-out tours of USA and Japan in June. In July they supported REM's Milton Keynes show (and "The Bends" shot back up the chart) and REM's Europe/USAMonster Tour through August to October. Between succesful trips abroad, they recorded new material. At Tel Aviv, rounding off the European leg of the REM tour, Michael Stipe announced to the audience; *"There aren't many things that scare me, but Radiohead, are so good they scare me"*.

In August Radiohead supported Neil Young at a show in Denmark, then returned to appear on the last episode of MTV's Most Wanted and record new material. "Just", released as a single, gave them yet another Top 20 hit, the excellent video won much praise. A large venue tour of the UK was anounced and sold out in a few weeks.

September; Radiohead recorded "Lucky" like other *"cream of British pop"* for "HELP" which raised millions for children in Bosnia. Also, "The Bends" made the last 12, but not the last 10 of the Mercury Prize shortlist. Winners, Portishead, told a Radio 1 interview their surprise and delight at winning and also remarked that they thought "The Bends" should have won. "Lucky" was chosen as lead track on the first HELP EP. Ironically, Radiohead started a tour with Soul Asylum only to have all their equipment stolen on the first date. Not so "lucky" with airplay either - apart from excellent support from XFM and two local radio stations in Scotland, "Lucky" received no playlisting/day time play, reminiscent of when "Creep" was first released. "Lucky" will be included in the Now That's What I Call Christmas '95 so will still get to raise money for War Child

1995 ends with things coming together. "The Bends" universally acknowleged one of the albums of the year, the Winter 95 tour another triumph, almost religeous chanting and rioutous applause *"see the sweat, drown in the howls and gasp at the love-sick eyes of 2,000 people who pogo out of their socks at the joy of seeing Radiohead back. And that's just to the slow, depressing numbers"*. Their "sore thumb" appearance on this year's Smash Hits Poll Winners Party won them further praise.

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By December they were one of few acts to sell out European dates and finished 1995 with big Christmas Radio Concerts in USA. They release "Street Spirit" as a single and after a year of world touring, take a well earned holiday.

DISCOGRAPHY

05/05/92-DRILL EP - deleted: 12"/CD/tape - "prove yourself" (ep)/"stupid car"/"you" (ep)/"thinking about you" (ep version). 3,000 copies. Reached 101 UK chart.

21/09/92-CREEP EP - deleted: 12"/CD/tape - "creep"/"lurgee"/"inside my head"/"million \$?". Reached 78 UK singles chart.

01/02/93-ANYONE CAN PLAY GUITAR - deleted 12"/CD/tape - "anyone can play guitar"/"faithless the wonder boy"/"coke babies". Reached 32 singles chart.

10/05/93-POP IS DEAD - deleted 12"/CD/tape - "pop is dead"/"banana co (acoustic)"/"creep (live)"/"ripchord (live)". Reached 42. Banana Co from Signal Radio 'Head special, live tracks supporting Belly at Town & Country Club, Feb 1993.

06/09/93-CREEP - deleted 7"/CD/tape "creep"/"yes I am"/"blow out (remix)"/"inside my head (live at chicago metro)" - ltd edition of 7" ep on clear vinyl. ltd edition 12" "creep (live acoustic version for KROQ Radio L.A.), "you (live)"/"vegetable (live)"/"killer cars (live)" - live tracks from Chicago Metro June 1993. Reached 7 UK singles chart.

26/09/94-MY IRON LUNG LUNG - 12"/Blue CD/tape "my iron lung"/"trickster" / "punch drunk lovesick singalong"/"lozenge of love" Red CD "my iron lung"/"lewis"/"permanent daylight"/"you never wash up" - Reached 24 singles chart.

17/02/95-HIGH & DRY/PLANET TELEX - Red CD/tape "High & Dry"/ "Planet Telex"/"Maquiladora"/"planet telex hexidicimal mix" remixed by Steve Osbourne.

Blue CD "planet telex"/"high & Dry"/"killer cars"/"planet telex l.f.o. mix" 12" planet telex hixidecimal mix, l.f.o. jd mix, hexidecimal dub/"high & dry" - Reached 17 singles

15/05/95-FAKE PLASTIC TREES - Blue CD 12"/tape "fake plastic trees"/"india rubber"/"how can you be sure" Red CD "fake plastic trees" then three accoustic numbers from London Eve's Club: "fake plastic trees"/"nice dreams"/"street spirit". Reached 20 UK singles chart.

07/08/95-JUST - 12"/Tape/Blue CD "just"/"planet telex karma sunra mix"/"killer cars mogadon version" Red CD "just"/"bones (live), "planet telex" (live), "anyone can play guitar" (live)

22/01/96-STREET SPIRIT (FADE OUT)- 7" "street spirit"/"bishops robes" BLUE CD "street spirit"/"talk show host"/"bishops robes" RED CD "street spirit"/"banana co"/"molasses"

ALBUMS: PABLO HONEY (FEBRUARY 1993) REACHED NO.25 (GOLD LP)
THE BENDS (FEBRUARY 1995) REACHED NO. 6 (GOLD LP)

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